
2015 BAY AND WATERSHED RESTORATION GRANTS

Announcement of Request for Proposals (RFP) for Projects to Control Aquatic Invasive Species in Freshwater Lakes and Ponds



Issued April 8, 2015



All proposals due Friday May 8, 2015

1. Introduction & Purpose of Grants

As a component of the Narragansett Bay and Watershed Restoration Fund (BWRF) program, the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) is pleased to announce the availability of grants to assist in the implementation of projects that will result in the effective control of aquatic invasive plants in freshwater lakes and ponds. Specifically, this Request for Proposals (RFP) is seeking project proposals that will reduce, control and manage the growth of aquatic invasive plants in order to restore habitat conditions in lakes and enhance other beneficial uses of lakes and ponds including public recreation. Grant funding, which requires a matching contribution from the grantee, will be awarded on a competitive basis pursuant to the guidelines set out in this Request for Proposals (RFP). RIDEM has about \$150,000 in proceeds from a 2012 state environmental bond issue approved by Rhode Island voters for award via this RFP. These funds will support a limited number of awards.

2. Applicant Eligibility – who can apply?

RIDEM will accept grant applications from:

- lake associations
- watershed councils
- municipalities
- non-profit organizations
- other eligible applicants (see BWRF rules – definition of person)

Applicants for projects will need to demonstrate that they are ready to proceed with their proposed project including documenting that they possess sufficient legal authority or have obtained appropriate permissions to implement the proposed project. Partnerships among entities with a common interest in lake management are encouraged. Private consultants are not eligible to receive grant awards directly on behalf of other governmental or non-governmental entities.

Applicants must demonstrate administrative capacity to manage their grant funds and comply with applicable state fiscal requirements including accounting, record-keeping, competitive procurement and reporting procedures. Grants are administered on a reimbursement basis. Applicants must also demonstrate ability to manage their project, document matching contributions and report on progress of deliverables specified in a grant agreement.

3. Project Eligibility - What type of projects are eligible?

Proposals for projects to implement actions to control aquatic invasive plants are limited to freshwater lakes, ponds and reservoirs that are:

- Classified as a surface water of the State of Rhode Island;
- Known to be infested with one or more aquatic invasive plants;
- Publicly accessible for recreation or considered a source of invasive species to a downstream lake that is publicly accessible.

Eligible projects to actively control invasive populations include:

- **Implementation** of chemical control actions (permitted aquatic herbicide applications) to control and manage invasive plants consistent with a management plan;
- **Implementation** of permitted mechanical or physical control actions to control and manage an invasive species consistent with a management plan. Examples include but are not limited to techniques such as manual hand-pulling; diver assisted suction harvesting (DASH) and benthic barriers.

A previously developed management plan (in the form of a multi-year aquatic plant management strategy, lake management plan or lake water quality restoration plan) must provide the technical basis for embarking on the proposed invasive control project. The plan should draw together relevant information, including waterbody specific data on the identification and distribution of aquatic invasive plants, in order to specify a recommended course of action for managing aquatic invasive species. The plan should identify the stage of infestation and the actions needed to pursue **lasting** control of the invasive species that are causing degradation of lake conditions. Project proposals should be consistent with the plan associated with the lake. All projects should include a component for evaluating effectiveness or monitoring the project outcome.

Consistent with the regulations governing the BWRP, projects to conduct lake surveys, design a control strategy or prepare a lake management plan, which constitute planning, are not eligible. This Request for Proposals is restricted to implementation projects that will provide active control of invasive populations in lakes or ponds.

To be eligible, projects must have a goal of reducing the adverse impacts of aquatic invasive plants in a manner that can be expected to lead to improved lake conditions, including restoration of native plant communities. Within this context, projects that are designed to provide temporary control for only one season will be deemed ineligible.

Examples of **eligible** projects would include;

- An herbicide treatment strategy that includes an initial broad treatment to achieve some measure of control and planned follow-up targeted treatments to address locations within a lake that continue to exhibit excessive plant growth.
- Mechanical removal of water chestnut coupled with a planned follow-up program of hand-pulling.
- Removal of an early, contained infestation of fanwort through manual removal or diver assisted suction harvesting (DASH).

Examples of **ineligible** project:

- Mechanical harvesting of milfoil species that reduces plant growth during a single growing season only.
- Projects in lakes to control the nuisance growth of **non-invasive** plants (duckweed, lily pads) or phytoplankton (algae).
- Projects to control invasives in upland areas including vegetated wetlands

For all projects, applicants will need to describe how they will comply with all applicable permitting requirements.

Per the regulations governing the BWRP, projects involving experimental techniques or research are not eligible.

RIDEM welcomes the opportunity to help applicants determine whether a project would be eligible for a grant. For assistance, contact:

Sue Kiernan sue.kiernan@dem.ri.gov 401-222-4700 extension 7600 or
Katie DeGoosh katie.degoosh@dem.ri.gov 401-222-4700 extension 7211

4. Eligible Grant Expenses – what costs are allowable?

As part of the application, the written project proposal submitted for this grant funding must include a detailed project budget listing all costs and expenses related to the proposed invasive control project. Applicants may apply to be reimbursed for a portion of eligible expenses, generally **limited to up to 50% of total project costs**, (see section 6 of this RFP). Eligible expenses that may be reimbursed include the costs of labor (personnel salary and fringe), travel, supplies, equipment use and contractual services directly related to project implementation. With respect to personnel, RIDEM generally will not subsidize salaries of existing governmental staff, but rather encourage such expenses to be allocated as part of match (the proposing organization's monetary/in-kind services or other contribution toward the project—see section 6).

As projects are required to include measures of success, monitoring activities to assess the success of an invasive control action is an eligible expense when proposed in conjunction with the implementation of the control action.

Note: RIDEM and the State of Rhode Island take no responsibility for project work done outside the term or scope of a grant agreement or prior to full approval of a grant agreement. Applicants selected for awards should NOT anticipate any funding being provided for work that is done before approval of a written grant agreement. For entities planning work in the late spring or early summer, RIDEM will work with successful grantees to address and clarify issues of timing on a case by case basis. Agreements are not valid until the Rhode Island Department of Administration issues the appropriate encumbrance (i.e., purchase order or PO release). All agreements must be signed and dated by an authorized agent of the sponsor and RIDEM.

5. Project Time Periods

The grant awards will be authorized via grant agreements for a limited period of time. Projects that will be completed within a **one to three year time period** will be favored. Projects not promptly initiated or that fall substantially behind schedule once underway may have their grant awards rescinded or reduced. DEM encourages applicants to take into consideration and plan adequate time for procurement and obtaining permits or other approvals in their project schedule. Projects may reflect activities that will be carried out during a 1-3 year time period.

6. Match Requirements

“Match” refers to funds, goods or services used to conduct the project that have been contributed to the project by the applicant and will NOT be paid for by the grant funds. All project match must: (1) relate directly to the project for which the match is being applied; (2) be reasonably valued; and (3) be supported by documentation. Match is an indicator of the applicant’s commitment to a project and is considered in proposal eligibility and ranking.

Match may include: (1) cash; (2) the value of noncash, in-kind contributions (e.g., value of equipment donated for use the project; or (3) the value of goods and services directly contributed to the project. Third-party in-kind contributions are allowed. Volunteer services provided to the sponsor for project activities and travel costs may be valued as match at rates consistent with rates ordinarily paid by employers for similar work. General volunteer time is currently valued at \$23.53/hour.

Examples of costs that might be used as eligible match include the following:

- Cost or value-per-hour rate multiplied by the number of hours of work performed in execution of the project by the applicant including procurement of services, management of contracts and project coordination.
- Cost of equipment rentals, materials or supplies contributed to or and used in the project.
- Cost of labor donated to the project.
- Cost of contractual services used in project.

State BWRF grants are typically provided in 50% to 50% grant to match ratio. The applicant is strongly encouraged to provide match in an amount equal to or exceeding the requested grant amount. Pursuant to the rules governing the fund, the RIDEM Director, at her sole discretion, may consider a lower matching contribution when justification is provided. In no case should the match be less than 25 % of the total project costs. Applicants should apply using the applicable 50% match commitment and indicate on the bottom of Form B that they would like to

be considered for reduced match. The proposals should provide sufficient justification for the reduction by referencing the expected improvement in lake conditions. Projects that comprehensively address the pollutant loadings to a specific waterbody will be favored over those that abate only one or partial sources.

7. Preparing the Proposal for Final Approval

For projects that are selected for an award, RIDEM may request the applicant modify the project proposals based on comments received during project evaluations and the selection process. The applicant would be required to submit a revised project proposal/scope of work to the RIDEM prior to final approval. Once all comments have been satisfied, the final proposal or scope of work will become the basis for the grant agreement that will be executed to formalize the grant award.

8. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Project proposals will receive an initial screening by representatives of the RIDEM Office of Water Resources for basic eligibility criteria. Eligible proposals will be referred to a DEM review committee(s). The review committee will evaluate the eligible proposals consistent with ranking criteria developed in conjunction with rules governing the BWRP in order to make recommendations subject to final decision by the RIDEM Director. Ranking criteria address:

- Severity of impacts resulting from aquatic invasive species in a given lake or pond;
- Value of resource to be protected and public benefits derived;
- Beneficial impact to waters of the state;
- Beneficial impact to aquatic habitat;
- Technical merit and likelihood of success;
- Consistency with approved plans; e.g. lake management plan
- Readiness to proceed

9. How to Apply - Final Submittal Deadline –May 8, 2015

Note: In prior RFPs, DEM included a pre-proposal procedure. To expedite the grant-making process, this step has been eliminated for this RFP. However, if you are unsure about your eligibility as a potential applicant, eligibility of a project or certain project costs, you are encouraged to contact the DEM-OWR as indicated in Section 3 above for feedback in advance of filing a proposal.

Final proposals must be received by RIDEM **no later than 4:00 p.m. on Friday May 8, 2015**. The proposal must include mandatory application forms (Form A and Form B), a narrative project description, project timeline and other supporting materials as appropriate; e.g. site map, letters of support, photographs, etc. Refer to Appendix A for details and application forms.

RIDEM encourages that proposals be sent electronically (Microsoft WORD format). Hard-copies will also be accepted.

All proposals must be submitted to the DEM Office of Water Resources as follows:

Ms. Elice Gasbarro
DEM Office of Water Resources Room 200
235 Promenade St.
Providence, RI 02908
Elice.gasbarro@dem.ri.gov

| Lake Invasive Species Control Grant Timelines | |
|--|---------------------|
| Announcement of RFP | April 8, 2015 |
| Final Grant Proposals Due to RIDEM – Office of Water Resources | May 8, 2015 4:00 pm |
| Review of Proposals/ Announcement of Grant Awards | By May 30, 2015 |
| Projects can be initiated after grant agreements are formally executed. DEM expects projects to be completed within 12-36 months of the project start date specified in the grant agreement. | |

10. Project Administration

- 10a. Grant Agreements –For projects selected to receive grants, RIDEM may request the applicant to modify the project scope of work based on comments received during project evaluations and the selection process as part of developing and finalizing the grant agreement.

Grant recipients must enter into a written agreement with RIDEM to establish mutually agreeable terms for completing the project. Items in the agreement include, *but are not limited to*:

- Scope of work including tasks, schedules and deliverables. (Agreements usually have the approved project proposal incorporated as the scope of work.)
- RIDEM and sponsor responsibilities, including interim and final reporting requirements.
- Statement of the project's total budget, matching budget, and grant.
- Statutory and regulatory requirements for contracting such as competitive bidding, fair-share allotments, i.e., minority-owned and women-owned business enterprises (MBE/WBE).
- Requirements for subcontracting.
- Project payment schedule and payment terms.
- Record-keeping and reporting

Payments will be made on a reimbursement basis in accordance with the payment schedule and terms contained in the project grant agreement. Reimbursement is tied to performance targets and payments are not scheduled more frequently than once a month.

Grant recipients will be required to provide progress reports to RIDEM. Projects are expected to be completed in the timeframe of the grant agreement. Timeframes will be

negotiated in the range of 6-24 months. Time extensions will not be granted without specific and appropriate justification.

- 10b. Pre-project and Pre-contract Costs - **RIDEM and the State of Rhode Island take no responsibility for project work done outside the term or scope of the agreement or prior to full approval of an agreement. Successful grantees should NOT anticipate any funding for work that is done before approval of a grant agreement.** Agreements are not valid until the Rhode Island Department of Administration issues the appropriate encumbrance (i.e., purchase order). All agreements must be signed and dated by an authorized agent of the sponsor and RIDEM.
- 10c. Procurement - The expenditure of funds pursuant to these grants is subject to state law governing procurement, including requirements for competitive bidding and goals for participation by minority or woman business enterprises (MBE/WBE) that may be applicable to a project. In general, where consultant, engineering or professional services are to be obtained, a competitive process is required to establish pricing. RIDEM reserves the right to review and approve the award of any contract or subcontract. Specific requirements regarding procurement of services will be reflected in the written grant agreement.
- 10d. Permitting – Lake invasive control projects will typically require one or more permits or authorizations from RIDEM or CRMC to proceed. Applicants should consider the time needed to acquire permits and other agency reviews and plan projects accordingly. Failure to obtain and comply with permits is generally considered a material breach of a grant agreement and may jeopardize project funding.
- 10e. Fiscal Assurances - Sponsors will be subject to fiscal assurances per terms of the project agreement. Fiscal assurances include but are not limited to the audit and recordkeeping requirements established by the State of Rhode Island. The grantee must have adequate fiscal controls to satisfy these requirements.

Appendix A: Final Application Content & Forms

Your completed application should include the following items:



FORM A: Applicant and Project Information



FORM B: Project Budget Detail



Narrative Project Description (as described below)



Site/Location Map (as described below)



Other Supporting Material
(pictures, data, letters of support, etc.)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR NARRATIVE PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A 2-4 page narrative project description is required. The narrative should address the following 6 elements:

1. Problem Statement and Purpose: Provide a brief, clear statement of the project purpose, including:

- Long term (5-10 years) lake management goals
- How this project will contribute to meeting long term goals
- Specific project objectives
- Which aquatic invasive species will be targeted;
- The stage of plant infestation (extent of the problem in the lake)
- Adverse impacts resulting from growth of invasive species in the lake/pond.

2. Project Approach and Tasks: Provide a concise overview of project approach by identifying and describing major tasks. Each task should be associated with an output (e.g. secure professional services, obtain permit, apply herbicide treatment, monitor effectiveness etc.) and clearly state who will be responsible for completing each task.

- Activities to be undertaken during the project year
- Expected level of plant growth control and how success will be measured
- Aquatic invasive species control action(s) selected
- Rationale for selecting the control action(s) and expected effectiveness in achieving control
- Provide a reference to an applicable lake management plan, aquatic invasive species management plan or other relevant plan.
- Describe recent management activities as applicable; e.g. prior year project.
- Attach a copy of the plan or the cover sheet and relevant section of the plan.
- Describe the permits and land owner permissions that have been or will be obtained to allow the project to proceed to implementation.
- Indicate if permit applications have been filed or permits have already been obtained.

3. Management and Coordination:

- Describe who will manage the project; how contracting and subcontracting will be done.
- Describe if and how other agencies and organizations will participate in the project, including letters of commitment or support if available.

4. Final Products & Measurable Environmental Results:

- Describe expected outputs including a final report;
- Describe how you will measure the environmental results of your project. Results and/or benefits may be documented in both quantitative and qualitative terms, such as acres of area treated and characterization of improved habitat conditions; e.g. reduction in nuisance plant growth.

5. General Schedule & Milestones

- Provide an estimated schedule with key milestones and note any restrictions on when the project can be executed to optimize its effectiveness.

6. Project Area Map (Required attachment)

- Provide a map of the water body(s) indicating the project site(s).

Form A: Required Applicant and Project Information

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|
| 1 Project Title | | | | | |
| Project Title | | | | | |
| 2.a Applicant Information | | | | | |
| Organization | | | | | |
| Contact Name | | | | | |
| E-mail | | Phone | | Fax | |
| Street address | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| 2.b Signature of Applicant | | | | | |
| Authorized Agent Signature | | | | Date | |
| Name | | | | | |
| Title | | | | | |
| 3. Grant Application Category Amount Requested (fill in amount requested) | | | | | |
| Bay and Watershed Restoration Fund –Aquatic Invasive Species Control in Freshwater Lakes | | \$ | | | |
| 4. Project Management <input type="checkbox"/> Same as above (2a) | | | | | |
| (List the person(s) responsible for managing this project) | | | | | |
| Full Name | | | | | |
| Title | | Organization (if different from 2.a) | | | |
| Email | | Phone | | Fax | |
| Street Address | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| 5. Project Location | | | | | |
| Name of lake or pond | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Town(s) where lake is located | | | | | |
| List Aquatic Invasive Species targeted: | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| 6. Source of Match | | | | | |
| Applicant's Funds <input type="checkbox"/> | | Third Party Funds <input type="checkbox"/> | | In-kind Services <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Please Attach Project Location Map | | | | | |

Form B: Project Budget Detail

Fill out Tables A and B completely. Table A list the major tasks and subtasks for the project. It must include providing a final project report to RIDEM. An estimated schedule For Table A, some projects may be comprised of more (or less) tasks than the number of rows provided in Table A, so please expand the table as needed.

Table A: Project Tasks¹, Deliverables, Schedule, and Estimated Costs

| Task # | Description and Task | Deliverables | Schedule ² | Requested Amount (\$) | Non-federal Match (\$) | Total Task Cost (\$) |
|--------|----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | Totals | | | |

1. Tasks include each activity of the project and must include progress and final reports.

2. Please express as the month number in which the task is expected to be completed from start of project (i.e., Month 2)

Table B: Project Costs by Budget Category

| Budget Category | | | | | | Requested Grant Amount | Match Amount | Total Cost of Category |
|--|-------|--------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| 1. Salary and Fringe ¹ | | | | | | | | |
| Name | Title | Salary | Percent Time Charged to Project | Fringe (as percent of salary) | Total Salary Cost | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Indirect Costs ² | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Supplies ³ | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Equipment ⁴ | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Travel and Training ⁵ | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 6. Contractual ⁶ | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 7. Other | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Totals | | | | | | | | |
| To request reduced match, enter the reduced match in the non-federal match column in this row. (no less than 25% of total projects costs required) | | | | | | | | |

Specify sources of match: Amount from other federal sources: _____

Amount from non-federal sources: _____

1. Include salaries and fringe benefits paid for work performed on the project. "Salary" should include the rate per hour by position. "Fringe benefits" are employment benefits given in addition to wages or salary, such as health, retirement, etc. Grant funds are typically not used to pay municipal employee's salaries; these expenses should be used as match.

2. Indirect can only be charged by those entities that have negotiated an indirect rate with the State of RI in advance

3. Includes expendable items purchased by the grantee such as office supplies, field supplies, equipment costing less than \$1,000, etc.

4. Includes any items of equipment costing more than \$1,000.

5. Includes direct transportation costs incurred during work, such as tolls, costs of using vehicle (vehicle costs = number of miles x mileage rate of \$0.445/mile)

6. Includes procured services not provided by grantee, such as consultants, professional services, etc. You must identify tasks and outputs for each contractor. If contractual work has not yet been bid, provide estimated costs.

7. Includes costs not described by previous categories.